

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6385

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 14039

E.O. 11652: AGS: DECLAS SEPT 30, 1973

TAGS: OCON, SEATO

SUBJ: SEATON: DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT FOR 18TH COUNCIL MEETING

1. COUNCIL REPS AT SEPTEMBER 11 MEETING WILL CONSIDER DRAFT OF PRESS STATE (TEXT FOLLOWS) TO BE ISSUED AT CONCLUSION OF 18TH COUNCIL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 28. ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT EXPECTING FORMAL CLEARANCE BY ALL COUNCIL REPS OF DRAFT STATEMENT NEXT TUESDAY, EMBASSY REQUESTS COMMENTS ON TEXT BELOW IN ORDER THAT PRELIMINARY US VIEWS MAY BE AIRED AT THIS MEETING. (STATEMENT WILL BE PRESENTED FOR FINAL CLEARANCE BY COUNCIL REPS AT SEPTEMBER 26 MEETING IN NYC IN ORDER TO BE PRESENTED TO COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.)

2. WE WOULD PREFER DELETION OF PARA 6 RE MILITARY PLANS, BELIEVING IT WOULD SERVE OUR INTERESTS BETTER IF THIS POINT WERE COVERED INSTEAD BY ADDITION OF PASSING REFERENCE TO "REDUCTION IN MILITARY ACTIVITIES" IN PARA 5. AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, HOWEVER, FAVOR RETENTION OF THIS PARA FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSUMPTION. THEREFORE WE WOULD PARTICULARLY APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS RE PARA 6.

3. DRAFT STATEMENT FOLLOWS:

QUOTE. THE SOUTH-EAST ASIA TREATY ORGANIZATION WILL IN FUTURE DIRECT ITS ACTIVITIES MAINLY TOWARDS HELPING THAILAND AND THE
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PHILLIPPINES WITH THEIR OWN PROGRAMMES TO PROMOTE SECURITY AND

STABILITY.

SEATO' AID WILL BE DESIGNED TO HELP OVERCOME SUBVERSION AND INSURGENCY PROBLEMS BY PROVIDING ADVICE, TRAINING AND EXPERTISE AND ANALYSES OF INSURGENCY PROBLEMS.

TO AID DEVELOPMENT, SEATO MEMBER COUNTRIES WILL CONTINUE AND POSSIBLY INCREASE THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AID TO THE TWO REGIONAL MEMBER COUNTRIES, THAILAND AND THE PHILLIPPINES.

THIS WAS ANNOUNCED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF SEATO, HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SUNTHORN HONGLADAROM, AFTER A MEETING IN NEW YORK TODAY OF SEATO COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, THE PHILLIPPINES, THAILAND, TY UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES.

MR. SUNTHORN SAID THAT SEATO'S NEW EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPMENT WORK ORIENTED TOWARDS SECURITY AND STABILITY RECOGNIZED THAT THE THREAT OF CONVENTIONAL MILITARY AGGRESSION HAD DIMINISHED, AND THAT THE MAIN AREA OF CONCERN TO SEATO IN THAILAND AND THE PHILIPPINES WAS SUBVERSION AND INSURGENCY.

MR. SUNTHORN SAID THAT THE EXISTING MILITARY PLANS WOULD BE RETAINED BUT THAT NO FURHTER ACTIVE MILITARY PLANNING WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN UNTIL MEMBER GOVERNMENTS DIRECTED OTHERWISE.

SELCECTED MILITARY EXERCISES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE HELD WITH THE PRIMARY OBJECT OF IMPROVING THE JOINT OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES AND EFFICIENCY OF THE FORCES OFMEMBER COUNTRIES.

AS A RESULT OF THESE CHANGES, THERE WOULD BE FULL INTEGRATION OF CIVIL AND MILITARY PERSONNEL AT SEATO HEADQUARTERS IN BANGKOK.

THE COUNCIL MEMBERS CONFIRMED THAT THESE CHANGES DID NOT AFFECT THEIR ADHERENCE TO THE MANILA TREATY WHICH BROUGHT SEATO INTO BEING. THEY NOTED FUTHER THAT THE TREATY CONTAINS PROVISIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE OF STABILITY WHICH REMAIN RELEVANT. END QUOTE.

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